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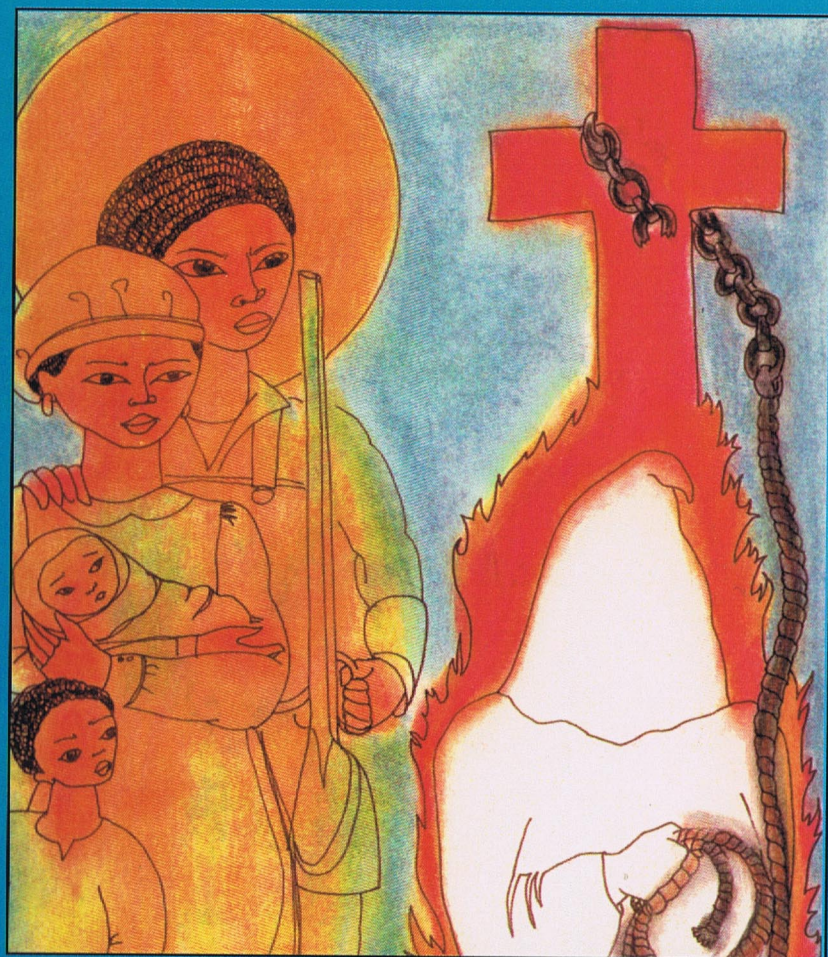
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THE KU KLUX SPIRIT



by J.A. Rogers

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THE KUKLUX SPIRIT

by
J. A. Rogers

The Ku Klux Spirit was originally published in 1923—as a series of articles, and as a book—by The Messenger Publishing Co. (A. Philip Randolph, Chandler Owens). Written by J. A. Rogers it offers valuable insight into the history and origins of the Ku Klux Klan. Rogers was a diligent researcher into the history of Black people. During his long life, Rogers produced many volumes which include: *Worlds Great Men of Color, Sex and Race, 100 Amazing Facts About the Negro, Africa's Gift to America* and others. W.E.B. Du bois once stated that no man living had written as much about the Negro as Rogers.

Black Classic Press takes great pride in reproducing *The Ku Klux Spirit* in its entirety. The text remains essentially as it appeared in the original edition, this includes typographical, and/or gramatical errors.

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FOREWORD

What would the success of the Ku Klux Klan mean to the nation?

A study of the psychology of the present Ku Klux Klan will show that it is in every detail what the old Klan was. So are its aims and methods. The sole difference between the two is that the present one is more extensive in its operations. The activities of the first Klan were directed mainly at one group of American citizens; the second, at several groups. Hence the most accurate prediction as to what the success of the present Klan would mean to the nation is, without a doubt, to be found in a knowledge of the workings of the old Klan.

An added reason for a knowledge of the old Klan is that such knowledge will serve as a mirror for those now opposing the present Klan, many of whom contend that the old Klan accomplished much good, and that it was its opponents who were really the menace. Many of the opponents of the old Klan, however, were among the foremost and most patriotic Americans of their day. Since history repeats itself may not Americans of a future day similarly regard the opponents of the present Klan, however well-meaning those opponents may be?

The reason generally given for the origin of the Ku Klux Klan is that it came into being in order to protect the white people of the Southern States against rascally Northern whites and Negroes in the period immediately following the Civil War. This reason, right or wrong, would appear to be justified, because it is that given in the majority of the popular sources of information. For instance:

Woodrow Wilson, in his "History of the American People," Vol. V, says of the Klan: "The white men of the South were aroused by the instinct of self-preservation to rid themselves by fair means or foul of the intolerable burden of government by the votes of ignorant Negroes and conducted in the interest of adventurers."

The Encyclopedia Britannica says: "The object was to protect the whites during the disorder that followed the Civil War, and to oppose the policy of the North toward the South."

Henry P. Fry, who took a leading part in the exposure of the present Klan by the New York *World* in 1921, says in his book, "The Modern Ku Klux Klan": "They were organized as a matter of necessity for the purpose of policing a section of the country where political madness and hatred ruled supreme."

Thomas B. Gregory, former Attorney-General of the United States, in an address to the Texas Bar Association in 1906, said: "Did the end aimed at and accomplished by the Ku Klux Klan justify the movement? The opinion of the speaker is that the movement was fully justified, though he, of course does not approve of the crimes and excesses incident to it."

During the expose by the New York *World* of the present Klan it was asserted repeatedly by correspondents and others opposed to the present Klan that the reason for the formation of the original Klan was a just and worthy one. This also is the view of the majority of American historians.

Henrik Van Loon, author of "The History of Mankind," says in the New York *Evening Post*, September 2, 1922, in "America for Little Historians:

"With the Negro voters and their unprincipled friends the Northern carpet-baggers in control of political affairs there was no chance for the better white element in the South to accomplish anything in the way of building up their fallen fortunes. Their only hope was in some way to deprive the Negroes of their votes and thus make way for a white majority. As they could not do this legally in the face of the Fifteenth Amendment they set about it in another way."

Frank Tannenbaum in the "Century Magazine," April 1923 says:

"The original Ku Klux Klan was a reflex of the vindictiveness of Northern politicians and of the unscrupulous carpet-bagger who swooped down upon the South as a vulture upon a wounded and stricken victim. It was a desperate act of self assertion and self defense. It was an attempt to rescue for the South the remnants of a civilization that was being subverted by coarse hands."

Are the above statements regarding the origin of the Ku Klux Klan grounded on the recorded facts of American history?

The history of the Ku Klux Klan is to a great extent that of the South in the decade following the Civil War.

When the Civil War ended in April, 1865, the North pardoned all who had fought against the Union. Instead of an indemnity, it asked of the Confederate leaders only an oath of obedience to the Constitution. In the matter of reconstructing themselves, it gave the defeated states a free hand, stipulating only that the process accord with the Thirteenth Amendment, which had abolished slavery, and which had passed Congress three months before. When reconstruction had been accomplished on these lines the states were to appear before Congress to apply for readmission to the Union. When the Southern representatives appeared, however, some of them as early as December of the same year, Congress not only promptly rejected them, but decided to give the Southerners a free hand no longer.

What caused Congress to make this decision?

THE BLACK CODE

Congress had refused readmission because of certain laws that had been made by these states contrary to the Thirteenth Amendment, which had been ratified by all of them, except Mississippi. Some of these laws applied to the freedmen directly: others included the whites, but in intent affected the freedmen only.

In Alabama, Mississippi, and Florida, for instance, a white person could declare a Negro "stubborn" and "refractory." The latter would then be brought before a justice of the peace before whom his word counted for nothing, and fined fifty dollars. In default of payment he was to be "hired," that is, sold at public auction for a period of six months to anyone desiring labor.¹

James G. Blaine, a member of that Congress, a speaker of the House, and a candidate for the presidency, says in his "Twenty Years of Congress," page

1. Laws of Alabama, Dec. 1865, No. 112, Sec. 4. Laws of Mississippi, Nov., 1865, Chap. VI. Laws of Florida, 1865, Chap. 1467, No. 4, Sec. 1.

94. "No fair man could fail to see that the whole effect, and presumably the direct intent, of this law was to reduce the helpless Negro to slavery for half the year—a punishment that could be repeated whenever desired, a punishment sure to be desired for the portion of each recurring year when his labor was specially valuable in connection with the cotton crop, while for the remainder of the time he might shift for himself. By this detestable process the "master" had the labor of the "servant" for a mere pittance; and even that pittance did not go to the servant, but was paid into the treasury of the county, and thus relieved the white men from their proper share of taxation."

In Mississippi, by the provisions of the Black Code, as these enactments were known, all Negroes were called upon to provide comfortable homes for themselves and families within twenty days or be sold for the remainder of the year. The freedmen, it will be recalled, had been discharged penniless, and most of them had been evicted from their homes, which was the property of their former masters. The punishment could be repeated at will at the expiration of the sentence, virtually making the victim a slave for life. In Alabama, Louisiana and Mississippi, sheriffs were ordered to report all minors under eighteen years of age whose parents were considered unable to provide a decent home for them. These minors were to be bound to employers of labor for a period of six years, with the provision that "former owner of said minor shall have the preference." Anyone, parents included, caught enticing away a minor was to be fined \$500, and be sold if unable to pay. Negroes who met in any assembly were likely to have their gathering declared "disorderly" and be fined fifty dollars each.

In South Carolina Negroes were forbidden to follow any occupation, except field-labor. "No person of color," ran the law, "shall pursue or practice the art, trade, or business of an artisan, mechanic or shopkeeper, or any other employment, or business (besides that of husbandry, or that of servant under contract for service of labor) on his own account and for his own, or in partnership with a white person until he shall have obtained a license therefor from the Judge of the District Court, which shall be good for one year . . . and upon payment by the applicant to the Clerk of the District Court of one hundred dollars. . . ." (Statutes at large, S. Carolina, 1865, Vol. XIII, p. 269.)

That is to say, a freedman, regardless of ability, was not only compelled to follow field-labor, but must sell his labor to a white person. To work for himself, he was compelled to pay for the privilege.

In Mississippi no Negro could lease or rent land. Chap. IV, Sec. 1, of the laws of Nov., 1865, said: "... the provisions of this section shall not be so construed as to allow any freedman, free negro, or mulatto to rent or lease lands or tenements, except in incorporated towns or cities, in which places the corporate authorities shall control the same."

The intent of this law may be explained thus: Crops were grown on shares with the master who owned the land. Through inability to get land otherwise Negroes were thus compelled to share. The purpose of this law was essentially the same as the one just quoted above: to compel the freedmen to work for their former masters.

Laborers were compelled to make contracts during the first ten days of the year for the remainder of the year. For breaking a contract so made there was a severe penalty.³ In Florida, among other discriminations, no Negro was permitted to have a gun or other weapon of any kind.

And so on with the Black Code of the other states. The laws of many of the townships were even more drastic. These laws, it will be seen, were enacted either in 1865, or early in 1866.

Blaine, in the volume already mentioned, says (p. 94): "That which was no offense in a white man was made a misdemeanor or heinous crime if committed by a Negro. Both in the civil and criminal code his treatment was different from that to which the white man was subjected. He was compelled to work under a series of labor laws, applicable only to his own race. The laws of vagrancy were so changed as, in many of their provisions, to apply only to him, and under their operation all freedom of movement and transit was denied. The liberty to sell his labor at a fair market rate was destroyed by the interposition of apprentice laws. Avenues of usefulness and skill in which he might specially excel were closed against him, lest he should compete with the white man. In short, his liberty in all directions was so curtailed that it was bitter mockery to refer to him in the statutes as a "freedman." The truth was that his liberty was merely of form and not of fact, and that the slavery which was abolished by the organic law of a Nation was now to be revived by the enactment of a State . . .

"There may have been more cruel laws enacted but the statute books of the world might be searched in vain for one of meaner injustice . . .

"A form of servitude was re-established, more heartless and more cruel than the slavery which had been abolished."

Woodrow Wilson, speaking of the Black Code, says of the Southerners:

2. Laws of Alabama, Feb., 1866, No. 120. Laws of Louisiana, 1865, Nos. 16 and 19. Laws of Mississippi, Nov., 1865, Chap. V.

3. Laws of Mississippi, Nov., 1865, Chap. VI. Laws of Florida, 1865, Chap. 1470, Sec. 2, No.

"They were but "whitewashed rebels' at best, and in nothing showed their unchanged temper more clearly than in the treatment of the freedmen."

A wave of indignation stirred the civilized world at this new enslavement. The Northern States, with their tremendous loss in men and money still fresh in their minds, saw slave labor becoming again a menace to their industries and made vehement protest. They urged their representatives in Congress to immediate action. The reply to the Black Code was a strengthening of the Freedmen's Bureau, through which aid and military protection were given to the Negroes. Finding this inadequate, however, Congress drafted and passed the Civil Rights Bill (Apr. 9, 1866), decreeing that "there shall be no discrimination in civil rights or immunities among the inhabitants of any state or territory on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."

The Black Code was nullified. The penalty for violation of the Civil Rights Bill was a fine of \$1,000, or imprisonment of one year.

The Southerners were exceedingly angry at this check. The passions that had been excited by the war again rose to fever heat. Their reply to the Civil Rights Bill was a reign of terror. Union men, loyal Southern whites, and Negroes were shot down indiscriminately by the hundreds. On July 20, 1866, a Union convention at New Orleans was raided by the Confederates. Two hundred and sixty Union men were slain.⁴ On Sept. 3, 1866, the white loyalists of the South met in a convention at Philadelphia and demanded protection from Congress. Every original Unionist in the South they declared, was ostracised. "More than one thousand devoted Union soldiers," said petition, "have been murdered in cold blood since the surrender of Lee, and in no case have their assassins been brought to justice."

Congress found, in the meanwhile, that one effect of the Civil Rights Bill had been to increase the representation of those states that had been re-admitted, thus giving them a freer hand at oppressing the freedmen. Negroes formerly had only counted as three-fifths. Now under the Civil Rights Bill they were quasi-citizens and counted as one. Seeing this, Congress decided on a still more effective measure to ensure the Negro's freedom. It planned a momentous step: It decided to make the freedman a citizen.

The stirring incidents of this period were intensified by a bitter struggle between the President and Congress. President Johnson, a Southerner by birth, stolidly maintained that the South should be permitted to pursue its own methods of reconstruction, Black Code or not, at least for a time. The

4. Rept. No. 261, 43rd Congress, 2nd Session.

President's motive was to get the Southern States back in the Union, and he was willing to give them the ex-slave as a peace offering. Congress, obedient to the prevailing sentiment of the North, was firm in its demand that the South should be reconstructed now, according to the decree of emancipation. Johnson had vetoed the Civil Rights Bill as he had done the Freedmen's Bureau Bill, and Congress had as promptly passed them over his head. During the wordy contest which lasted for nearly four years, murder, rapine and destruction ruled in the South. How the president was finally impeached and escaped conviction by the margin of a single vote is a matter of history.

South Placed Under Military Rule

Congress now saw no hope for the restoration of order in the South and on March 4, 1867, it passed the Reconstruction Act, over the veto of the President, placing the refractory states under martial law. They were divided into five military districts, and were each to be ruled by a Major-general of the Union Army until "said rebel states shall have formed a constitutional government in conformity with the Constitution of the United States." This step, it would appear, should have been the one taken at the start.

Congress, as was said, had decided on the radical step of making the freedman a citizen. It was indeed a radical step, as the North and the majority of the Northern Congressmen were opposed to it. Most of the Northern States, at that time, barred Negroes from voting and had severe jim-crow laws. Blaine says: "Only a minority of Republicans were ready to demand suffrage for those who were recently emancipated, and who, from the ignorance peculiar to servitude, were presumably unfit to be entrusted with the franchise."

Congress had to choose between establishing military rule in the South or giving the vote to the freedmen. It chose what it believed to be the lesser evil, and passed the Fourteenth Amendment. Some of the Northern states refused to accept the new amendment, but it finally became a law in July, 1868, over the veto of the President.

Henry Ward Beecher, who played a prominent part in the affair, said in a letter to the Louisville Courier Journal, March 30, 1885: "Suffrage was given to the negroes not from a belief in their fitness for suffrage, but from a conviction that it was necessary for their defense."

Blaine, speaking of the Fourteenth Amendment, says emphatically (Vol. I, p. 266): "As a matter of historical truth which has ingeniously and continu-

ously, whether ignorantly or malignantly, been perverted, this point cannot be too fully elaborated, nor too forcibly emphasized: *The Northern States, or the Republican Party which then wielded the aggregate political power of the North, did not force Negro suffrage upon the South or exact it as a condition of re-admitting the Southern States to the right and privilege of representation in Congress until after other conditions had been rejected by the South.*"

Thus, but for the attempt of the former slaveholders to re-enslave the Negroes the latter might have remained, like the Indians, wards of the nation.

Congress now gave as a condition for re-admission to statehood the acceptance of the Negro as a citizen. Awed by force of arms the South yielded for the second time. On the 2nd of February, 1870, nearly two years later, Georgia, the most refractory of all, ratified the new amendment and was re-admitted to the Union in July of the same year.

The newly re-admitted states, however, were still determined to exploit the freedmen, and had been using various ruses to keep them from the polls and out of the state legislatures. Georgia, for instance, had been excluded before for refusing to seat Negro members in her legislature, in pretty much the same way that in recent years the legislature of New York State refused to seat Socialist members, and was compelled to do so by the Supreme Court. The new amendment had guaranteed the vote merely on the basis of representation. To remedy the evil, Congress now decided to take the last step and give the vote directly to the freedmen. Accordingly, it passed the Fifteenth Amendment, again over the veto of the President. The Fifteenth Amendment became a law of the Union on March 30, 1870, and was finally ratified by Georgia.

With the re-admission of Georgia to the Union, the North recalled the greater part of the army, confident that it had seen at last the closing incident of a great war. Great was the rejoicing among the loyalists, North and South.

SECOND PERIOD OF RECONSTRUCTION

The South Again Fails to Keep Its Word

The loyalists, as was said, rejoiced thinking that they had seen the closing incident of the war. Their hopes, however, were destined to be rudely shattered. The events that had gone before, violent as they were, in comparison with those that were to follow were as the faint puffs preceding a hurricane. Murder, atrocity, and anarchy were to show themselves on a vaster and deadlier scale.

The ex-slaveholders were not a whit less resolute to recover that which they regarded as their property, and when driven from one position merely entrenched themselves in another. Many of them had been firm in the expectation of a bonus, something like that which the British government had given to the slaveholders in its dominions, seventeen years before.

"It was soon disclosed," says Blaine, "that on the part of the large mass of those who had participated in the rebellion, properly speaking, indeed on the part of the vast majority of the white men of the South, there was really no intention to acquiesce in the legislation of Congress, no purpose to abide by the Constitutional Amendments in good faith."

This determination was greatly strengthened by the attitude of the President. It may be noted here, that throughout this period, the ill-feeling engendered by the war was still running high, and that it would be particularly aggravated in the South by the presence of the Northern white men who were engaged in enforcing the new amendments. These Northerners, called "carpet baggers," were about as welcome as a white prohibition officer of Kentucky is among the moon-shiners that infest the mountains of that state.

The South, broadly speaking still thirsted for slave labor; perhaps more intensely than ever now that it had been placed further out its reach. Black Codes could no longer be used. Fear of the Northern army made the use of force undesirable. The only recourse of the ex-slaveholders and their allies, the impecunious whites, was the methods of the habitual offender. But at this time, by the meekest accident a deadlier, a far more insidious and powerful way of reducing the Negro to near-servitude was discovered. That force was Superstition. The Negro's own ignorance was to be forged into fetters for him.

What Happened When Hell Froze Over

On a dark night in the late fall of 1866 a solitary individual was walking on the western outskirts of the town of Pulaski, Tenn. Near the road, on the brow of a hill, were the ruins of a mansion that had been destroyed some years before by a cyclone. Around the ruins were storm-torn trees whose limbless trunks stood grim and gaunt like spectral sentinels against the sky. The man trembled with fear as he neared the shattered house. He had heard others tell how the owner, slain during the war, had returned to haunt it. Ghosts were more generally believed in, in those days, and stories of how those killed in the war had returned to visit their homes were numerous. Many whites had declared

positively that they had again seen a husband or a son who had been killed in battle; many Negroes swore to having seen their dead masters. The man hoped to pass safely by this time and never to be caught out alone again. But as he rounded the corner and came in view of the house he saw a sight that turned the blood in his veins to an icy cold. There, outlined against the blackness of the ruins was an apparition, a thing of unearthly appearance and immense height in a flowing white robe. When the man had recovered his power of locomotion, he sped to the town and said that he had seen a ghost twenty feet tall.

A number of bolder citizens went to investigate. Arriving at the spot they saw now not one but what appeared to be a whole army of spectres. Some of enormous size and height stood still and erect like sentinels on the broken steps, others moved among the ruins and about the verandahs, while on the path to the house stood a figure about twelve feet tall, apparently on guard. From the strange band came not a sound.

The majority of the investigators fled.

A few bolder ones advanced toward the lone figure. On its head was a white hood from which protruded huge ears, erect. Beneath the hood was the grinning skeleton of a human face, from whose empty sockets flashed a weird, strange light.

A sceptic approached the figure and demanded its identity. A profound silence. Then somewhere from the depths of the figure came a sigh and a voice that said in expressively sad and sepulchral tones: "A spirit from the other world. I was killed at Chickamauga."

The bold one stepped forward as if to investigate further, but the apparition slowly and majestically lifted a draped arm. From the loose white folds emerged a fleshless arm that blazed with a sickly, unearthly flame, the grinning teeth moved, while from the chest of the object came the command in a freezing, monotonous voice:

"Go."

The bold man waited no longer but fled with the rest.

A few nights later a number of Pulaskians walking together for company saw a body of ghostly cavalry sweep by noiselessly and disappear in the distance. The horses on which they rode were draped in white and had skeleton heads from whose hollow eyes came the same strang light. The only evidence of reality was the dust and the movement of the bushes by the wind they had set in motion.

From time to time others would see these strange creatures in lonely lanes and deserted places after nightfall. The belief in ghosts was more firmly established than ever. Few would leave their homes at night.

Who were these strange creatures, and what part were they playing?

The members of the Confederacy, on its disbandment in April, 1865, immediately began to join and to form secret societies to oppose Northerners and to keep the Negroes in what was considered their place. Many of these secret societies had been in existence long before the war. One of these, the Paddle Patrol, or patter-rollers, as the slaves called it, had been formed to keep the slaves in check and to oppose the abolitionists. By September, 1865, these secret organizations existed by the hundreds.

It is important to remember the year, 1865. The majority of historians assert that the purpose of these societies was to prevent Negro domination at the polls and "carpet bag" rule. As was seen the Fourteenth Amendment did not become law until 1868, and the Fifteenth until 1870. The Thirteenth Amendment itself was not ratified until December 1865, nor did the Civil Rights Bill become law until April, 1866.

How, then, could these klans have been formed for that purpose, at that time, when they could not only not vote, but were unarmed?

As was mentioned in the introduction, the Encyclopedia Britannica itself gives the date of the formation of the Ku Klux Klan as 1865. In the Ku Klux inquiry by Congress, in 1871, it developed that these secret organizations had begun their outrages immediately after the war and that Negro suffrage had but served to intensify them.

The most powerful of these societies, some of which were in existence before the war, while others evolved later, were the White Brotherhood, the White League, the Pale Faces, the Constitutional Union Guards, the Unknown Multitude, the Black Cavalry, the White Rose, the '76 Association, and the White Camellias. *All of these societies* later became known as the Ku Klux Klan, although that name may not have originated until 1866.*

ORIGIN OF THE KU KLUX KLAN PROPER

One evening in May, 1865, six young men, veterans of the late war, met, according to their daily custom, in a lawyer's office in Pulaski. After the excitement of war they were being consumed by boredom in the sleepy little town. On

* Some authorities say 1865. Lester & Wilson say 1866.

this evening, one of them suggested, as a way out of the monotony, the formation of a secret society on the model of his college fraternity. The others welcomed the idea, and the Greek word "kukloi" (circle) was suggested as a name. "Call it 'Ku Klux'" said another. "Why not Ku Klux Klan," suggested a third. The alliteration and the mysterious affect made an instant impression and the last name was immediately adopted. Officers were elected and the ritual and the oath of secrecy were composed. The main idea was to create a society, different from those in vogue—one whose aim was solely fun and frolic. Because of the prevailing belief in ghosts, it was decided that the greatest fun could be had by playing upon the superstitions of the townsfolk.

J. C. Lester and D. L. Wilson, two of the original six, in their book "The Ku Klux Klan," say: "Each member was required to provide himself with the following outfit; a white mask for the face with orifices for the eyes and nose, a tall fantastic cardboard hat so constructed as to increase the wearer's apparent height; a gown or robe of sufficient length to cover the entire person. Each individual was left free to choose his own color and cut and each endeavored to make his robe as fantastic as possible."

The greater part of the fun, it was expected would be furnished by the initiation ceremony and that was made as ridiculous as possible. Strange names were used in order to add to the air of mystery.

The young men began to throw out veiled hints of their society and of the amount of fun to be had in it. Others clamored for admission. The question put to the candidates were absurd and designed to provoke great mirth. When a candidate was accepted the Grand Cyclops, or president, would say:

"Place him before the royal alter and adorn his head with the regal crown."

The royal alter was a large looking glass; the regal crown was a tall hat bedecked with two huge paste-board imitations of donkey's ears. In this headgear the novice was placed before the mirror and made to repeat the couplet:

"O wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursel's as ithers see us."

As the last words were falling from his lips, says Lester, the Grand Turk, or marshal, jerked the bandage from his eyes, and before him appeared his own ludicrous image in the glass. To increase his discomfiture the removal of the bandage was the signal for uproarious laughter from the members who were all masked and dressed in hideous fantastic garb. Many were the devices used for concealment and for rendering the costume as ferocious in appearance as possible.

The youths chose the ruined mansion as their lodge-room. Sentinels were posted and made to stand on stumps over which flowed the robe, thus giving the appearance of unusual height. The hollow of the death's head was filled with phosphorus, while skeleton arms of cardboard rubbed with the same substance were held in the hands. All moved about on stilts concealed by the robes. These were the spectres the lonely traveller had seen.

Talk of the mysterious society was soon on everyone's lips. The newspapers of other states took it up, and it soon became the leading topic of discussion in the South. New lodges sprang up everywhere. The klan spread by sheer mystery, and as it grew, the impression was deepened that this new society was preparing some mighty coup in the interest of the South.

The former slave holders, ever on the alert for some means of re-enslaving the Negroes, saw the reaction of the Negroes toward the "ghosts" and began to make use of it. They told the freedmen that the white-robed prowlers were the ghosts of their former masters and overseers. Hell, they said, had frozen over and the "ghosts" had come back to inflict a terrible punishment on the stubborn. Tales were told of how such-and-such "a bad nigger" in another town had died in great agony because he had not done as he was told.

For the bolder Negroes the following ruse was used: An apparition, whose hollow skull flashed fire, mounted on a horse draped in white and shod with felt or rubber, would call at the cabin for a dring of water. When the trembling occupant brought a cupful the "specter" would demand a bucketful which putting to his head he would drain at a draught, saying as he returned the empty vessel: "This is the first drop of water I have had since I was killed at Shiloh." The water went into a rubber-bag concealed beneath the costume. The terrified man was then told to do as the white men bid him, or on the next visit he would be carried off to hell.

Another trick: the horseman would hold out his bridle, with a skeleton hand and command the Negro to hold it. He would then lift his detachable head, and make a motion as if to remove it altogether, upon which the man would be sure to run away. Sometimes the horseman would enter the cabin and lay a train of gunpowder which he would ignite with his heel. One of these visits were usually enough to cow all but the boldest.

On Independence Day, the citizens of many of the leading towns of the South awoke to find the sidewalks littered with slips of paper with the words: "The Ku Klux Klan will parade tonight." The Klan, says Lester, had been avoiding publicity, now it had decided to get all it could.

That night the people of Pulaski thronged the streets in the hope of learning at last something of this mysterious association. The klansmen met by signal in the woods and rode through the town in soldierly formation and perfect discipline. Their hideous costumes, the flaming torches, the terrifying appearance of their draped horses, and the uncanny silence of their movements created but greater mystery and terror. Scrutinize, as the bystanders would, they could not recognize a single man or horse. For more than two hours the hooded horsemen rode in deathly silence. They numbered only four hundred, but arriving at a lonely spot they would wheel and march back, giving the impression that they were tens of thousands.

The ex-soldiers of the Confederacy rushed to join the Klan. In 1869 its membership was estimated at 550,000. The members in all the societies totalled over a million. By 1870 almost the whole Confederacy was again in arms, this time unseen—The Invisible Empire.

General Nathaniel B. Forrest, an ex-slave broker, was chose as head. Forrest was the Confederate leader responsible for the massacre of Fort Pillow, where hundreds of captured Northern soldiers were shot down in cold blood. J. B. Gordon, G. W. Gordon, A. H. Colquitt and other Confederate generals held high commands.

EXTENT OF THE INVISIBLE EMPIRE

According to Section 1, Art. 2, of the Constitution of the Invisible Empire "the jurisdiction of the Order shall be co-terminous with the states of Maryland, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee." It was in short, an empire which included all the states of the Confederacy and those states with a strong pro-slavery sentiment.

The Invisible Empire was divided into so many realms, equivalent to states; the realms into dominions, that is, congressional districts; the dominions into provinces, corresponding to counties, and the provinces into dens, or local centres.

The Empire was ruled by a Grand Wizard, and ten Genii, that is, the Emperor and his staff. Gen. Forrest had succeeded Jeff Davis. Over each realm was a Grand Dragon and eight Hydras; over a dominion was a Grand Titan; over the den was a Grand Cyclops, and so on.

The Grand Wizard ruled with absolute power. Art. VII, Sec. 1, of the pre-

script of the Klan reads: "Any member who shall betray or divulge any of the matters of the Order shall suffer death."

"The members of the order," says Lester, "considered themselves bound by the supreme oath of the Klan and other oaths, if in conflict with it, were not binding."

The Invisible Empire was an autocracy in the fullest sense of the word.

Tactics of the Klan When Ghosts Ceased to Frighten

The Klan began its intimidation by mummery. But "ghosts" do not frighten for long. Seen often enough they soon become normal to the most timid. Negroes would now and then shoot a ghost to learn its identity. Northerners also had to be reckoned with.

The next step was threat and then force. Members of the Grand Army, white Republican leaders, and Negroes were found mysteriously slain. Negro school-houses were an especial object of attack. Members of the Klan were found as mysteriously slain. Southern loyalists, or scalawags, as they were called, aligned themselves with the Negroes and then re-commenced a series of disorders that convulsed the South for the next three years. The Civil War had broken out afresh on a smaller but more vindictive scale.

Negro leaders, Grand Army-men, Republicans (then called Radicals), white teachers of Negro schools, and Southerners who had accepted the new amendments were regarded as enemies by the Invisible Empire. All were grouped under the term "abolitionists" which in the parlance of the "Empire" meant "one who favors and seeks to promote Negro equality, miscegenation, rape, arson and anarchy."

In the reign of terror that followed, white Unionists and Negroes were lynched by the thousands, white women teachers were murdered, whipped and raped; women, black and white, were outraged; and pregnant women ripped open. There has probably existed, in no other nation, such lawlessness as that which then existed under the Invisible Empire.

In judging the character of the klansmen, it is necessary to remember that the majority of its members were ex-soldiers, men inured to cruelty for four years of war, and likely to stop at no excess.

It was almost impossible to punish such of these midnight assassins as were caught. Judge, jury and sheriff were likely to be klansmen. Witnesses were intimidated. All that was necessary to acquit a murderer was a sign. When the

crime was too bad as to compel attention the verdict usually rendered was that death had been inflicted by the deceased himself or by Negroes.

The Invisible Empire did not stop at terrorizing Northerners and Negroes. Murderers, thieves and thugs found in the secret method of the Klan convenient cover. Donning its disguise they merged their crimes with those of the klansmen. This terror that stalked disguised at midnight, began to grow unmanageable. In September, 1868, the legislature of Tennessee decided to suppress the klan and passed a law against it. On February 20, 1869, the governor of that state declared martial law, and called out the militia to hunt down the klansmen. A similar action was taken by North Carolina. *Upon this the more timid and lawabiding members rushed to withdraw. Gen. Forrest, Gen. Gordon and other leaders, at the prospect of facing the Union Army again declared that the purpose of the klan had been accomplished. Gen. Forrest issued orders for its disbandment and endeavored to wash his hands of the whole affair.*

Woodrow Wilson, who may be regarded as a defender of the original Klan, says in Vol. V, p. 94, of his history: "Their work grew under their hands and the zest for it. Brutal crimes were committed, the innocent suffered with the guilty, a reign of terror was brought on, and society was infinitely more disturbed than defended."

PSYCHIC FACTORS OF RECONSTRUCTION

Reaction of the Slaveholders to the Loss of Their Slaves

The question asked at the outset was whether the reason generally given for the existence of the Klan was based on the recorded facts of American history. Those facts have been presented. The psychic factors, or the state of mind of which these secret societies were the visible manifestations, have yet to be considered. Before proceeding with the history of the Klan, let us pause to do so.

It will not be difficult to understand the feelings of the members of the defeated Confederacy when after four years of war and the utmost sacrifices they returned pallid, starved and broken, to find ruin and desolation staring them in the face. The North had been magnanimous, but what matter that when they saw their towns destroyed, their thoroughfares covered with tall grass, their homes dilapidated or in ashes, their railroads ruined, their banking-systems demoralized, their currency a byword for worthless money, and weeds where

fields of grain would have been? But harder than all to them was the fact that they found the slaves they had fought so hard to keep, and whose strong arms they needed now more than ever, not only taken away from them, but free to decide whether they would work or not. Instead of being able to command with the lash, they now had to bargain for labor with the creatures they despised with all their hearts. But they were poor and they must either have labor for nothing or as near to nothing as possible. The alternative was to do their own work. Centuries of slave labor, however, had instilled very deeply into them the conviction that certain kinds of labor, particularly the kind most needed then—field-labor—was far beneath the dignity of white men, and fit only for blacks. This conviction, in all its original vigor, exists in most parts of the South today.

Writers of Reconstruction days tell of the large numbers of Southerners, utterly discouraged by the war, and the thought of rebuilding, who had given up in apathy and refused to do work of any kind. They tell also of the large number of Southern gentlemen, habitually averse to work, who would pass the whole day on the verandas, shifting out of the sun, moving only to get refreshments and complaining that “the lazy nigger” wouldn’t work. Many of the former masters did buckle down to work, however, even to field labor. But the majority were apparently in the position of the languid, spoilt darling of wealth, unaccustomed to earn a living who has been thrown on his own resources for the first time.

The great problem before the Southerners was reconstruction. The fields must first of all be tilled. One must eat. The answer to that problem they decided should be the freemen, who they were still firmly convinced were their property.

A Congressional report of this period pictures the psychology of the Southern whites of that time thus:

“They were domineering, impetuous, impatient of restraint, unwilling to submit to any government which they, themselves, did not control, easily roused to fierce anger and when so roused both as individuals and masses cruel and without scruple. They had never learnt to respect human rights as such or to tolerate the free expression of opinion which differed from their own, or to see dignity and manhood beyond their own class. It was such a people that engaged in the rebellion, and such a people who were required to live under a new order of things to which they had been led not by change of character or opinion, but mere force of arms.

“They had submitted to the national authority not because they would, but because they must. They had submitted to the constitutional amendments which rendered their former slaves their equals in all political rights, not because they would but because they must. The passions which led to the war, the passions which the war excited, were left untamed and unchecked except so far as their exhibition was restrained by the arm of power.”—(Report No. 261, 43rd Cong., 2nd Session.)

Reaction of the Slaves to Emancipation

How did the slaves re-act to emancipation?

Many of them would not work—many, but not all, as the former masters asserted or implied. A good many spent the time going from place to place, visiting old friends from whom very likely they had been forcibly parted. Freedom, they pictured as something like the heaven the white man had told them of—a place where one loafes forevermore. This impression was heightened by the Freedman’s Bureau, which gave the needy free food and clothing. What good, they argued, was it to be in heaven if one was forced to toil as if on earth? When one arrived in heaven, they asked themselves, shouldn’t he walk around to make sure that he had really arrived? If any man, white or black, had been forced to rise from his bed every day of his life, except Sundays and Christmas and to go to the fields to await the first faint streaks of dawn to commence his toil and there to remain under fear of the lash, till it became too dark to see, if such a man hated work it would be a most natural thing.

Again, if anyone had been cooped up in prison, barracks, or confined anywhere else and been liable to a severe whipping when caught outside, if such a man were set free isn’t it natural that he should wish to wander around to see some of the places he had hitherto only heard of? The masters resented these excursions. From force of habit they had come to regard the time of the black man as being exclusively their property.

The fact is, however that the great majority of the ex-slaves stayed in their old localities while most of the wanderers soon settled down again. Benj. J. Trumbull, who had been commissioned by President Johnson to report on the freedmen said: “it was only a temporary impulse of their newfound freedom to wander from their old homes and at last they returned generally wearied, hungry and forlorn.”

Another important factor was the changed attitude of many of the former

slaves toward work. The slave had always looked up to his master and imitated him. The master did not work. Because of that he was considered a gentleman. Those whites forced to earn a living were called "poor white trash." The more aspiring Negroes in consequence wished to live like the master. The response of the former masters to this, as was seen, was laws, veiled or open, compelling all Negroes to do field labor, and nothing else.

The situation, in short, was that while the desire of the masters for slavery was greater than ever, that of the ex-slave was perhaps as great in the reverse direction. Some wanted to be "gentlemen," others to engage in the trades and the professions, while the vast majority, while willing to follow the occupation they had always followed—field labor—desired as most men do, to reap some of the benefit for themselves. On the one hand was the freedman, unprotected save for the verbal bulwark of the decree of Emancipation; on the other was the master, eager again to have him in his power. There was the wolf glaring at the lamb and prevented from pouncing on him only through fear of the shepherd, who, in this case, was hundreds of miles away. After the war, the North, as was said, had left the South free to rebuild itself.

Having decided that the freedmen must be made to do the work, the next question was how to make them to do so under conditions as near to slavery as possible. The reason for the existence of the Negro, in the eyes of the majority of the Southern whites, then as now, is LABOR. It was for this reason and no other that he had been brought from Africa; it was for this reason that the South had fought so stubbornly to keep him, and that it holds on so firmly to him today even to the lynching of the white labor agents who come to induce him to go North, as during the last war. The innermost incentive to lynching, jim-cow laws, tales of the rape of white women, and all anti-Negro propaganda is the Negro's labor and how to get it at the lowest figure. Negro labor had been the real cause of the Civil War. Now, also, during the period of reconstruction it was the bone of contention. The answer of the Southerners, as to how to establish a condition as near to slavery as possible, was, as was seen, discriminatory legislation.

Conduct of the Freedmen Immediately After the Close of the Civil War

The following are the opinions of some of the leading eyewitnesses: Carl Schurz, U.S. Senator from Missouri, in his report to the President in 1865,

said: "The Negro is constitutionally docile and eminently goodnatured. Instances of the most touching attachment of freedmen to their masters and mistresses have come to my notice . . . Centuries of slavery have not been sufficient to make them enemies of the white race. *If, in the future, a feeling of mutual hostility should develop between the races, it will probably not be the fault of those who have shown such an inexhaustable patience under the most trying circumstances.*"

Smedes, in "A Southern Planter," says: "We expect them to go away or to demand wages, or at least give some sign that they knew they were free. Except that they were very quiet and serious and more obedient than they had every been known to be . . . we saw no change in them."

J. M. Alvord, Superintendent of Education in Georgia, wrote to Gen. Howard: "It is remarkable what a general reputation the freedmen have for good behavior. 'They work well when paid,' is the universal remark."

John H. Gilmer, in the Virginia Senate said, Feb. 17, 1866: "The freedmen, sir, in my opinion, merit the special and regardful consideration of all right-thinking men in the state. . . . As a class they are docile, humble and confiding. Such has been their nature in all the past; such is their nature now."

Gen. Gordon, Confederate veteran and second in command of the Ku Klux Klan, when questioned by the U.S. Ku Klux Klan Commission as to the conduct of the Negroes after the war, replied: "They behaved so well that the remark is not uncommon in Georgia that no race on earth relieved from servitude under such circumstances would have behaved so well."

Prof. J. A. Leland, an opponent of the Northern policy of Reconstruction and a Klansman in "A Voice from South Carolina" says: "The Negroes had not been tampered with and were as obedient and as faithful as they had been during the war."

(By "tampered with," of course he means any attempt of the Northern whites to get the Negroes to show a will of their own. The Southerners had resented to the death the freeing of the Negroes, and now would naturally regard with the greatest hostility any attempt of the Northern whites to increase that freedom.)

In opposition to the general docility of the Negroes was the attitude of some of the employers as reported by Gen. Kiddoo, a Union commander of the South, to President Johnson. Gen. Kiddoo's administration was favorably regarded by many of the former masters. He said: "One of the greatest

difficulties I have to contend with, in the experiment of free labor, is the want of patience on the part of the Southern people. They are too ready and almost eager to pronounce it a failure."

Carl Schurz says in his report: "Not only the former slaveholders but the non-slaveholding whites, who, even previous to the war seemed to be more ardent in their pro-slavery feelings than the planters themselves are possessed by a singular bitter and vindictive feeling against the colored race since the Negro has ceased to be their property. The pecuniary value which the individual Negro formerly represented having disappeared the maiming and killing of colored men seems to be looked upon by many of those as offences which must be forgiven to the outraged feeling of a people who have been wronged and robbed."

Carl Schurz goes on to tell how the least thing done by any single Negro was brought forward as proof that the whole race was unfit for freedom. He says: "I heard a Georgia planter argue most seriously that one of his Negroes had shown himself most certainly unfit for freedom because he had most impudently refused to be whipped."

Blaine, speaking of the Black code, says: "The Southern States deliberately resolved to prove to the public opinion of mankind that the Negro was fit only to be a chattel, and that in his misery and degradation, sure to follow the iniquitous enactments for the new form of his subjection, it would be proved that he had lost and not gained by the conferment of freedom among a population where it was impossible for him to enjoy it. They resolved also to prove that slavery was the normal and natural state for the Negro, that the Northern people in taking any other ground had been deceived by sentiment and had been following a chimera; that the Southern people alone understood the question and that interference with them by war or law should end in establishing their justification before the public opinion of the world. The Southern men believed and boasted that they would subject to general reproach and expose to shame that whole class of intermeddlers and fanatics (as they termed opponents of slavery) who had destroyed so many lives and wasted so much treasure in attempting the impossible and even it possible, the undesirable."

But the strongest testimony regarding the conduct of the Negroes came from their enemies as the following from the sworn testimony of Gen. Gordon, second in command of the Ku Klux:

"Gen Gordon . . . 'One of the things which I mentioned and which Gen. Clanton also mentioned was the behavior of the Negroes during the war; the fact which when almost the entire white population old enough to bear arms was in the army, and large plantations were left to be managed by the women and children, not a single insurrection had occurred, not a life had been taken, and that, too, when the Federal armies were marching through the country with freedom, so to speak, on their banners.'"

Question. "Scarcely an outrage occurred on the part of the Negroes at that time?"

Gen. Gordon. "Scarcely an outrage. When I made that speech at Montgomery I may say, without intending to compliment myself, that when I referred to the handsome behavior of the Negro during our absence in the army and his protection of our families at that time, my remarks were heartily responded to, and with great feeling by every man in the convention."

Question. "Do you mean the colored men responded to them?"

Answer. "No, sir, I mean the white men in that convention." U.S. Ku Klux Reports, Vol. VI, p. 320.

It is hardly likely that had the Negroes wished to attack the white women—as was now being charged—that they would have waited until the white males had returned, well-armed. If these faithful ones had begun to oppose the whites it seems that the logical conclusion would be that the whites were somehow to blame.

It is an undeniable fact that among those Northerners who came to settle in the South after the war—for the war had revealed to many of the Union veterans the beauties and opportunities of the South—were many who tricked both Southern whites and Negroes. It is also necessary to remember that the presence of a conqueror in a conquered country is always distasteful to its inhabitants. The feeling toward Northerners was bitter, if not vindictive. The news of Lincoln's assassination had been received with great rejoicing throughout the South. The resentment towards Northerners in many parts of the South today, after fifty-seven years and the appearance of a third generation, attests to the strength of that resentment then.

The majority of the Northern "immigrants," "carpet-baggers," as they were called, were quite as likely to be honest as the general run of mankind, and at least was no worse than their accusers, the former slave-holders—indeed some of the foremost men of the North were among the "carpet-baggers."

It is true, also, that during the period of military rule, and even later, illiterate Negroes—and illiterate Southern whites, too—were permitted to vote while many educated Southern leaders were barred from the polls. These, however, could have voted and held office by taking the oath of obedience to the Constitution of the United States. But they were “unreconstructed rebels” and had firmly refused to do so, although the new amendments had been ratified by their respective states. The evil, in short, had been of their own making. Some of the first really democratic laws the South had ever had—laws designed to protect all, rich or poor, black or white—were enacted by these “carpet-baggers” and Negro legislators. Negro Congressmen and legislators like John R. Lynch, Blanche K. Bruce, Wm. Murray, and Hiram R. Revels possessed as good education as the white Southern ones, and in the quality most necessary to a legislator, humaneness, they were certainly the superior of the Southerners.

There was also a great deal of political graft during the “carpet bag” regime. Without wishing to excuse it, one may say that it was no worse than that which had always gone on in the South, than that then going on at the North, or that whose unearthing caused such a sensation in San Francisco in 1905, or even that which exists so quietly in Chicago, Boston, or New York today.

The popular verdict throughout the South today, and to no small extent in the North is that a crime had been committed against the Southern whites by giving the freedmen the vote. William F. Sinclair has very completely answered that charge in his book, “The Aftermath of Slavery.” He says: “But if a crime had been committed on the white people there must have been criminals who committed the crime. Who were the criminals?” After naming fifty-three of the great leaders of the time, like Sumner, Wade, Blaine, Garfield and Hayes, he continues: “Here is the roster of American statesmen the equal of any that ever faced a great crisis in the history of the nation. Shall the memory of these men and their compeers rest under the black imputation of criminality? What serious citizen would think of mentioning in the same breath those devoted patriots, well poised and self-contained, with the leaders like Tillman, Money, McHenry, and Vardaman, not to mention Tray, Blanche, and Sweetheart, et al, who today seek to dominate the fair Southland.”

“The Northern leaders of this era were supported in every step taken by the great commanders who suppressed the rebellion: Generals Grant, Sherman, Sheridan, Hooker. . . . The movement was also supported by the great leaders of public sentiment in the nation, headed by Henry Ward Beecher, the whole

being re-inforced by twenty millions of loyal Americans, who willingly contributed the treasure and the blood which saved the Union and emancipated the slave.

“If the Northern civil leaders of this era were criminals, or committed a crime against the South, then the great commanders of the army and the navy and the vast majority of the people of the loyal states were sharers in the crime. In such a case virtue and patriotism resided only with the men who used their might and main to destroy the republic and afterwards to re-establish slavery.”

To return to the ex-slaveholders. When the exploiter is prevented from carrying out his schemes, openly, he generally resorts to subterfuge. The speculator, for instance, who can win large sums in a single day will not be content to toil for an ordinary wage when the bucket-shops or lotteries are closed. Similarly, it is quite reasonable to suppose that the ex-slaveholders, with their belief in slavery, would not be content to pay wages—low as it was, thirty cents a day—while their erstwhile chattels were there and unprotected. To assert otherwise is to deny one of the best known of human traits—the tendency to take advantage of others, particularly the ignorant and unprotected.

The history of the Reconstruction, when viewed from the psychological angle, presents a different aspect from that given in the majority of histories. Concede, however, that certain human beings are created solely for the use of others, and that those so created should recognize the theory and offer no resistance, and the popular histories referred to will be found to be logical. The true lover of freedom for all men, will discover a strong pro-slavery bias in these writers.

The vast documentary and other evidences of this period are conflicting. At a time when the feelings incited by the war were still at fever heat, minds ran to extremes. Eyewitnesses and documents give contradictory accounts of the same incident. Each side, it appears, in many instances, was endeavoring to prove itself right, and the other absolutely wrong. The impartial reader, therefore, may, with great justice, be sceptical of most of the accusations launched by either side against the other. One may even take the extreme view and say, with Napoleon, that history is a lie agreed on. But the fact demonstrated above, namely, that the former slaveholders *needed the services of the former slaves far more than the latter needed theirs, and had the power to compel those services, does seem to prove that the masters took the initiative*

in starting the disorders that convulsed the South between 1865 and 1872.

Again, if the slaveholders had been wrong up to the closing of the war, having been so adjudged by the civilized world, by what magic had they suddenly become justified?

The history of the Reconstruction when told from the viewpoint of aggression and defense is a different story. It is precisely from the angle that the histories, referred to, have not treated the Klan.

The question is: why have the majority of historians treated the history of the Klan thus? The answer is simple. They are Southerners and their treatises are a defense of the South. The victor usually forgets: the defeated does not. To save his face he takes refuge in argument. So it is with the South, which has not forgotten the war. With most Southern writers, whenever it is a case of white group and Negro, it is the latter always who are shown by them to be in the wrong. Henry B. Fry, who as was said, aided greatly in the expose of the present Klan, for instance, while strongly opposed to it practically endorses its attitude toward the Negro. In Chapter Eight of the book, already mentioned, he trumpets: I am a white man." "This is a white man's country." And with the same vigor that he denounces the Klan, he goes on to oppose equal opportunities for other American citizens because of color. His great objection to the Klan is not that it is un-American, but that it creates divisions among the whites.*

As for the few Northern historians, who have been interested, the attitude of the most of them may be expressed thus: "Oh well, the Southerners were white men, like ourselves, after all. We gave them a good licking and can afford to be easy on them now." Northern writers, too, get their viewpoint from the Southern ones. Van Loon and Tannenbaum are examples. It is a melancholy the powers that be. Tannenbaum, for instance, speaks glibly of the South as "a civilization that was being crushed by coarse hands." Just what was this civilization? It was a civilization built upon slavery in its most hideous form—it was a civilization that would have crushed the North with coarser hands if the North hadn't crushed it. As will be shown later, the North after 1876, proceeded rapidly to forget the Negro. But at that time it was a case of white men dealing with white men. Negroes, then, were most unwelcome in the North.

Nearly all the great Northern leaders, religious and political, spiritual and scholastic, like Henry Ward Beecher, Wendell Phillips, Charles Sumner, Wm. Lloyd Garrison, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Emerson, Lowell, Whittier,

* The classification of the white Catholic and Jew with the Negro," he says, "is a stupid blunder, if nothing else. It is stupid because in the event of trouble on an extensive scale stirred up by this organization or by its psychological effect on the country, it is splitting the white race into factions

Lyman Trumbull, Thaddeus Stevens, Benjamin Wade, Horace Greely, William Fessenden, Carl Schurz, Thomas Wentworth Higginson, President Grant—the saviors of the nation—were strongly opposed to the Klan throughout the entire period of its existence. If these leaders were right then, how happens it that they are adjudged wrong now?

The sum and substance of the whole history of the Klan and the attempts to justify it, is that the white men of the South were bad sports. Luck had been gloriously with them and grievously against the slaves for two hundred and fifty years. But the North and the Republican party had interfered, not because they had at last heard the cry of the slave, but because slavery was interfering with their business. The result was that events had turned against the Southern whites and slightly in favor of the slave. And here were the Southerners squealing, and going around dressed up in their bed-sheets. They were poor sports and reminds one of the fellow who, having lost his money in a game, waylays the winner, mask on face.

The Klan, even without its violence, was not justified at any period of its existence. Its express purpose was to defy the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution. Those who maintain it was, are clearly the spiritual predecessors of those who justify or wink at the Ku Kluxers of the Eighteenth Amendment—the bootleggers.

If each individual or party or state were justified in breaking that part of the Constitution, he or it does not like what a state of affairs there would be!

Continued Activities of the Klan

To return to the Klan. The devil that had been aroused would not be downed so easily. The Klan had now swollen to enormous proportions, perhaps over a million in number. This most formidable aggregation of cut-throats, thieves and rapists in the history of western civilization, could not be dissipated by a few words. This great menagerie of midnight rattlesnakes and human tigers grew more unmanageable than ever, and began to attack their former comrades. Starting with the goal of white supremacy the Klan soon passed it. Now the objective was "klan-nish-ness." White men, regardless of racial or other bonds, have always had differences one with another, and when

at a time when it should stand together."

This statement will be found to contain a queer contradiction. Fry says, in effect, that when the white race shall have arrived at a crisis caused by the activities of the Klan, it is at this very crisis that the whites should stand together. He clearly envisages one of the periodical massacres of Negroes in this country, and fears that, in the resistance of the Negroes to the klansmen and others, certain whites will find it to their interest to side with the Negroes.

an outsider, regardless of color, offended a klansman, he was regarded as having offended all klansmen. As in the case of the Germans and the English in the late war, the bond of color was obliterated by that of klanship, or nationality. The Klan thirsted for plunder. Rich Southerners and former klansmen who refused to pay tribute were murdered or driven from the state. Their homes, in many instances, were burnt, and their wives and daughters outraged.

Most historians attempt to create a difference between the period prior to the withdrawal of Gen. Forrest and that after. It is clear, however, that one period grew out of the other as noon out of forenoon, or as the viper out of the younger. Forrest, moreover, did not withdraw until February, 1869, the same month and year that Tennessee had begun military action against his "empire." In other words, *he was a klansman, only when it was safe to be one. In this he ran true to form: masked bandits are usually less brave than unmasked ones.*

Lester and Wilson, two of the original six, who, in spite of their cautious attitude, may be regarded as champions of the Klan, say in their book already mentioned: "Nothing is more certain than that a part of the evil the Klan was combatting at this period of its history grew out of its own methods."

Ryland Randolph of Alabama, editor of the *Independent Monitor*, organ of the Klan in that state, says: "At this late day (1901) I am gratified to be able to say that my company did much good service to Tuscaloosa country.*"

Had these organizations confined their operations to their legitimate object, viz.: Punishing impudent Negroes and Negro-loving whites, then their performance would have affected only good. Unfortunately, the Klan began to degenerate into a vile means of wreaking revenge for personal dislikes and animosities and in this way many outrages were perpetrated ultimately resulting in casting so much well deserved odium on the whole concern that about 1870 there was an almost universal collapse; all the good and brave men abandoning it in disgust." (Quoted from Lester and Wilson: "The Ku Klux Klan.")

The Klan had now become so great a menace that President Grant, who had been threatening the South with a third invasion of the Union army for some time, decided on direct action. In March, 1871, he asked Congress for power to act against the Klan. Congress replied by passing the Ku Klux Act, placing the army and navy at the disposal of the President, and making it a criminal offence "to go in disguise upon the public highway or on the premises of another." In

* His klansmen, he says, "thrashed" Negroes "in the regular antebellum style until their unnatural nigger pride had a tumble and humbleness to the white man reigned supreme."

October the President decided to make war on the Klan. He selected nine counties in North Carolina and began with them. After minor clashes with the Federal troops, two hundred klansmen were captured and brought to trial. The report of these trials and investigations in other states are deposited in the reports of the trial already cited and in the thirteen volumes of U.S. Ku Klux report. Do the Van Loons and Tannenbaums know of these, and other documentary evidence? Evidently not.

Verbiage of the Klan—Forms of Threat Issued By It

The mighty hob-goblins of the Confederate dead in Hell-a-Bulloo assembled.
Revenge, Revenge.

Be secret, be cautious, be terrible.

By special grant, Hell freezes over for your passage. Offended ghosts, put on your skates and cross over to Mother Earth.

Ye white men, who stick to black soulless beasts! The time arrives for you to part. Q, W, X, V, U, and so on from Alpha to Omega.

Ye niggers, who stick to low whites!

Begone, begone, begone, the world turns around—the thirteenth hour approaches.

Enemies reform! The skies shall be blackened.

A single star shall look down upon horrible deeds. The night-owl shall hoot a requiem o'er Ghostly Corpses.

Beware! Beware! Beware!

The Great Cyclops is angry! Hobgoblins report! Shears and Lash! Tar and Feathers! Hell and Fury!

Revenge! Revenge! Revenge!

Bad men! white, yellow, black, repent!

("Ku Klux Klan," by J. C. Lester and D. L. Wilson.)

OPINIONS OF LEADING EYEWITNESSES OF THE ACTS OF THE KLAN

James G. Blaine says: "In prosecuting their purpose these clans and organizations hesitated at no cruelty, were deterred by no considerations of law or humanity. They rode by night, were disguised with masks, were armed as

free-booters. They whipped, maimed or murdered the victim of their wrath. White men who were co-operating with the colored population, politically, were visited with punishments of excessive cruelty. It was difficult to arrest the authors of these flagrant wrongs. Aside from their disguises, they were protected against inculpatory testimony by the fear inspired in the minds of the portion of the white race who were not willing to join in their excesses. It was well said of the leading members of the klans that murder with them was an occupation and perjury a pastime!

"The white man who should give testimony against them did so at the risk of seeing his house burned, of himself being beaten with many stripes; and if the offender had been at all efficient in his hostility he was, after torture, in many instances doomed to death."

Gen. Holden, Governor of North Carolina, in his annual message to the legislature in 1870, said:

"The members of the klan, under orders of their chief, had ridden through many neighborhoods at night and had punished free citizens on account of their political opinion and had so terrified many of them by threats of future visitations of vengeance that they fled from their homes to the woods."

The document goes on to tell how the state representatives were murdered or driven from the state, how white women teachers were whipped; how sheriffs and judges, were shot, how the Stars and Stripes were torn down; how Negroes were thrown into the river with stones around their necks. "Some of these victims," says the governor, "were shot; some of them tortured; some of them had their mouths lacerated; one of them had his ears cropped, and others of both sexes were subjected to indignities which were disgraceful not merely to civilization, but to humanity as well.

"In fine, gentlemen, there was no remedy for these evils through the civil law, and but for the use of military arms, to which I was compelled to resort, the whole fabric of society in this state would have been destroyed, and a reign of lawlessness and anarchy would have been established."

Albion W. Tourgee, judge of the Superior Court of North Carolina (1868-1875), says in his book, "A Fool's Errand":

"Of the slain there were enough to furnish forth a battlefield and all from the three classes, the negro, the scalawag, and the carpet-bagger—all killed with deliberation, overwhelmed by numbers, roused from slumber in the murky midnight, in the hall of public assembly, upon the river-brink, on the lonely

woods-road, in simulation of the public execution—shot, stabbed, hanged, drowned, mutilated beyond description, tortured beyond conception. And almost always by an unknown hand! Only the terrible mysterious fact of death was certain. Accusation by secret denunciation; sentence without hearing; execution without warning, mercy or appeal. In death alone, terrible beyond utterance; but in the manner of death—the secret, intangible doom from which fate springs—more terrible still; in the treachery which made the neighbor a disguised assassin; most horrible of all the feuds and hates which history portrays. And then the wounded, the whipped, the mangled, the bleeding, the torn! men despoiled of manhood! women gravid with dead children! bleeding backs! broken limbs! Ah, the wounded in this silent warfare were more thousands than those who groaned upon the slopes of Gettysburg."

Horace Greeley said in the *New York Tribune*, June 16, 1871: "The real leaders of the Klan are the courthouse and tavern politicians, and the rank and file is composed of the idle, ignorant, worthless, poor white element, which is unquestionably the worst class of people to be found anywhere in the United States. They are deplorably ignorant, but have no desire for education for themselves or their children. They are wretchedly poor, but the desire for wealth never stimulates them to steady labor. They are without ambition to better the condition. They are coarse, cruel and vindictive, and in every way deserve the appellation of 'low-down people.'"

When the klansmen were brought to trial the ablest counsel in the South were provided for them. Reverdy Johnson, U.S. Senator from Maryland, and bitter foe of Negro suffrage, was senior counsel. During the trial occurred one of the most astonishing spectacles that has, perhaps, been witnessed in a court of justice. So atrocious, so staggering and revolting were the cruelties proven against, and confessed by, the klansmen, the Reverdy Johnson not only refused to plead for them, but denounced his own clients in the severest language, in open court. Addressing the prosecution, he said:

I have listened with unmixed horror to some of the testimony which has been brought before you. The outrages proved are shocking to humanity, they admit of neither nor justification, they violate every obligation which law and nature impose on man; they show that the parties engaged were brutes insensible to the obligations of humanity and religion."*

* Official Report Ku Klux trials, Circuit Court, Columbia, S.C., 1871, p. 129.

Some forty to fifty thousand persons were put to death by the Klan, and a greater number outraged.

Such is the organization that is whitewashed by most Southern historians under the assumption that there was a justifiable period of the Klan's existence. It is the same band of cut throats, unparalleled, that was served up to the nation by Thomas Dixon and David Wark Griffith, in their motion picture, "The Birth of a Nation," and made to appear as the most chivalrous knights of all the ages.

A fact not generally known is that there were thousands of Negro klansmen. These were used as spies on other Negroes and on Northern whites.

AIM OF THE KLAN

The ostensible aims of the Klan were to keep Negroes in near-servitude, to oppose the new amendments to the Constitution; and to prevent Northern whites from settling and trading in the South. Forrest, in his testimony, says; "It objects originally were protection against loyal leagues and the Grand Army of the Republic." It came to have a more sinister motive: it aimed to accomplish by invisible methods what the Confederacy had failed to do on the battlefield. What would have happened had the South been victorious? Slavery, without a doubt, would have been re-established in the North. Black slavery first, and then white slavery, unless England had permitted the re-opening of the slave trade. Slavery once re-established, the white race would have fought its way back to savagery.

When the Klan, which was but the Confederacy in its night-caps and night-gowns, once controlled the South, it planned to get control of the army, the navy, the Treasury, and other instruments of government. When the government, that had been so painfully and laboriously built up by the people of the nation, had once been undermined, a monarchy would have been set up, as note the absolute power that was wielded by the Grand Wizard. The Ku Klux Klan was a formidable conspiracy against the liberties of the American people. It is evident that there would have been a Klan of some sort even if the Negroes had not been given the vote.

Everything, however evil, has its good side. The Klan had at last one virtue; it talked little.

How the federal troops protecting the Negroes were withdrawn by President Hayes, in 1877; how the klansmen finally won their struggle to reduce the

freedom to near-slavery; how the Negroes were kept from the polls by shotguns, jim-crow laws, and grandfather clauses; how it took the Supreme Court of the United States thirty-nine years (1876-1915) to pronounce these methods illegal; how the Northern people, all except a few philanthropists and lovers of justice, either forgot the Negro or made one with the klansmen when Northern big business invaded the South and began to exploit Negro labor itself; how the Republican party betrayed the freedmen; and how tens of thousands of them were done to death in the meanwhile; are all a matter of history.

THE KLAN TODAY

The klan of today is running true to form. Since its revival hundreds of citizens, white and black, of both sexes have been killed or outraged by it. The New York *World* has published a long list of its proven atrocities. Awaking again, in 1915, for the purpose of preventing Negro migration to the North during the war, it selected as its next task the intimidation of returned Negro soldiers, who has tasted of freedom in France. Starting, as in 1865, with the goal of "white supremacy" it has extended its activities to include not less than one-third of the white population of North. In addition to being anti-Negro, it is now an anti-Semitic, anti-Catholic, anti-foreign-born, anti-liberal, anti-labor—one hundred percent American organization. The Negro question furnishing too limited a field for its activities, it invaded the North and, with the shrewdness of the born trickster, so adapted itself as to take in the leading hatreds of the various sections of the country. For instance, it is anti-Catholic in the South, anti-Jew and anti-foreign-born in the North, anti-Japanese in the West, and so on. It says, in effect, be a member and be free to indulge your particular hate. At present its activities are directed mainly against white persons.

The Klan makes a great pretense—a pretense that is almost a protest, of its loyalty to the United States, precisely as the old Klan did. It is a military organization, and endeavors to entrap as many legislators, government officials, officers of the army and navy, and the police as possible. The Invisible Empire is a monarchy. The ruler is styled "emperor," is addressed as "his majesty" and holds office for life. The subjects of this invisible empire operate with masks on their faces, after the manner of burglars and highwaymen.

The Klan appears to be on the increase, particularly in the Northern States, in spite of the fight being waged against it by newspapers and liberal organizations. On July 20, 1922, at an initiation ceremony in Chicago, Ill., there were present over 4,8000 novices and 25,000 klansmen from the local klan. There may be at the present time in the United States from a half a million to five million klansmen. Because of the abundance of hates of various sorts in America, the Invisible Empire has a profitable field for its activities.

A great deal of the blame for the revival of the Klan must be laid on the popular writers, who gave the old Klan a clean bill.

A nation, being but the individual multiplied, functions in fundamentally the same manner. Once permit the course of a disease in any part of one's body, because that part is thought to be not vital, and the blood-vessels will carry the germs to the heart, which will in turn send them to the other parts of the body where they will at once lay siege to the weaker parts. Similarly, once permit the course of an injustice to any group in a nation because that group is little thought of, and in time, the evil will be conveyed by the arteries, of trade, politics, and other inevitable intercourse through the nation, where it will attack the weakest of the favored group and the next weakest, and the next, accumulating power until it becomes the dominant force in the nation. Prejudice for the Negro has exerted a profound influence for evil on the political, social, and economic life of the white peoples of the United States—particularly on those who have indulged most in it—the poorer ones.

Secret societies in the past have dominated the organized government of nations. One called the Vehmgericht practically ruled Germany for more than a century, committing atrocities similar to those of the Klan. What has happened may happen again.

The present Klan thrives largely because many of those whom it opposes sympathize with it in its attack on certain groups. For instance, many foreign-born Protestants think the Klan does well to fight the Catholics; many Catholics that it does well to fight the radicals; the radicals that it does well to fight the Negroes and certain Negroes that it does well because it creates a division among the whites.